

the creation of a Literary Board, was carried out. It was enacted that there should be a "board of literature in this State," to be called "The President and Directors of the Literary Fund of North Carolina;" so called, because there was then only a *fund*, and no public schools. This board became mere trustees of the fund—they have been useful as such, and as such only have tried to be useful, it being impossible, in the nature of things, that they could, without immense cost to the State, efficiently discharge the duties of Head of the public schools, as originally intended by Judge Murphy.

Nevertheless, when we established our system of public schools, this literary board was made the nominal head—and thus, as I stated, we were still under the influence of the erroneous conclusions of one active intellect which thought for us twenty years before.

This board, however, was but a nominal head, divested of all the powers necessary to make it useful as such; and so we launched our experiment, so new to our people, so complicated, so liable to difficulty, and cut ourselves off from all direct communication with it.

Considering the obstacles in the way and the interests at stake, does it not seem remarkable, when we look back, that we did not try to devise means for keeping the public fully apprised of the progress of things? If we could divest ourselves of the prejudices which habit has fostered, we would be really astonished, after taking a calm retrospective view, to find there has been no worse confusion, and no greater despondency.

The Assembly which first convened after the adoption of the system, fraught with such momentous interests, must naturally have felt a lively concern to know what had been done—what difficulties had been met, what ones overcome, what good had been accomplished, what dangers still threatened, what hopes might be cherished, what expectations encouraged.